

Remarks by Secretary of State Henry A. Kissinger after meeting with Turkish Foreign Minister Caglayangil, Saturday morning, August 14, 1976.

The Foreign Minister and I reviewed the situation in the Aegean and before the Security Council and I emphasized to him, as I had done to the Greek Foreign Minister, the importance the United States attaches to a peaceful solution of the disputes. As a member of the Security Council and a friend of both parties, we will do our best to communicate the ideas of each party to the other and to see how we can be helpful. We are not acting as mediators but we are trying to play a useful role. I will now get in touch with the Greek Foreign Minister and we will use all our efforts to support peaceful resolutions of the disputes.

Question: When are you going to meet the Greek Foreign Minister again sir?

The Secretary: I don't know. I am going to be in touch with him and then we will decide.

Question: Mr. Secretary, if you are not a mediator, how would you describe your role? What exactly are you doing?

The Secretary: A good friend of both sides.

Question: (inaudible) re threat to peace and security--

The Secretary: Well, there have been concerns raised by various parties that it could lead to a threat to the peace, and we have

-2-

a very great interest that this not happen.

Question: And may we have your opinion about the Middle East and Africa problem?

The Secretary: Well, we've been trying to promote a peaceful solution in Southern Africa as well and in the Middle East, too, we are in favor of negotiations to find a settlement. So, as you see, we don't need any additional problems to keep ourselves occupied.

Question: Is the U.S. and Turkey in disagreement over this issue, in that the U.S. has applauded the move by Greece to go to the U.N. Security Council and the Government of Turkey has criticized it and called it chauvinistic propaganda?

The Secretary: We appreciate the Greek Government effort to find a peaceful method of settlement. I have the impression from talks with the Turkish Foreign Minister that he is also interested in a peaceful solution. I think we can play our role most usefully if we show understanding for the positive elements in the position of each side and try to bring the positive ideas that each side has to the other.

Question: Is the U.S. position closer to the Greek position than the Turkish position at this point?

The Secretary: The U.S. is not taking a position at this point. It is a problem that has to be solved between Greece and Turkey and the United States will do its utmost to facilitate our tow

-3-

friends to find a solution between themselves. It is not for the United States to solve it.

Question: Sir, do you think that negotiations may start while the Sismik is still there?

The Secretary: I don't know when negotiations will start. This again is a matter that has to be decided between the Greek and Turkish governments. All I am saying is that I have talked to both foreign ministers in the spirit of emphasizing the constructive elements in the positions and to see whether a peaceful solution can be found as I believe it must be found. And that is where the United States emphasis is.

Question: Mr. Secretary, do you have commitments from both sides that neither side will resort to military force?

The Secretary: We are at this time just exploring the positions. We believe that a peaceful solution is possible and that military force should be avoided. We have not asked for any commitment. We are encouraged all sides want to settle the problem peacefully.

Question: Do you characterize thest talks as cordial or frank?

The Secretary: The talks have been frank and cordial and constructive on both sides.

Question: And long!

The Secretary: Well, you have to remember that with my Turkish colleague we need an interpreter, while my Greek colleague speaks English better than I do. (laughter)

Foreign Minister Caglayangil: (translation) I had not been able to talk to the Secretary for a long time and, profiting from these recent matters, we had the chance of discussing a variety of matters which involve both countries. We have had a broad exchange of views on the Aegean question. I have explained the views of the Turkish Government on the matters in detail. That tension is not increased in the Aegean region is connected to the attitude of the Greek Government. We are for solving the problem through negotiations at the highest level. But we will never accept a prior condition in order to start these negotiations. I am hoping very much that this dispute between our neighbors and us will be solved at the end through peaceful and meaningful negotiations. We are grateful for the efforts spent by our ally and friend, the United States, in order to solve this problem.

Question: Is the Government of Turkey willing to cease its oil exploration in the disputed waters until this matter has been resolved?

Foreign Minister: (translation) We don't know what is the disputed area and the Greeks have not told us which is the disputed area.

Question: In Sri Lanka, Colombo, (inaudible)

Foreign Minister: Our relation with unaligned countries is very

good. We are **not** a member of the conference in Colombo, unfortunately.

After the briefing on the Turkish meeting, while Secretary Kissinger was on his way back to his room, a correspondent asked: "What is your reaction to the South African offer on Rhodesia?" He replied: "We consider the South African Foreign Minister's speech a positive contribution towards the solution of the problem. Difficulties, of course, still remain but we consider the South Arrican acceptance of the principle of majority rule for Rhodesia a major step forward."